AN APOLOGY

For the CONDUCT of

MR. CHARLES MACKLIN, &c.

COMEDIAN;

Which, it is hoped, will have ſome Effect in Favour of an aged Player, by whom the Public at large have for many Years been uncommonly gratified.

In pity to my age, oh! hear my tale,
Nor put me down in malice.——

——Good name, in man or woman,
Is the immediate jewel of the ſoul.
Who ſteals my purſe, ſteals traſh;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been ſlave to thouſands:
But he that filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
But makes me poor indeed!

SHAKESPEAR.

LONDON,

Sold by T. AXTELL, Royal Exchange; J. SWAN, oppoſite Norfolk-ſtreet, Strand; and all the Bookſellers. 1773.

[Price One Shilling.]

AN APOLOGY, &c.

THE attention of the Town has been lately ſo deeply and juſtly engaged in the diſpute between Mr. Macklin and a few of his brethren of the ſtage, that it is conceived a ſhort apology, in extenuation of that performer's conduct, will not be deemed an unintereſting obtruſion on the public, but rather an acceptable offering, as, without doubt, when their preſent reſentment, which has precipitated them to an extreme, has once ſubſided, they will regret the loſs of thoſe talents in the performance of an extremely difficult character, which have ever been unrivalled, and on which they uſed invariably to confer the moſt deſerved and boundleſs applauſe.

That a man, whoſe theatrical abilities have, for a long ſeries of years, been univerſally admired, ſhould, at a period when he has paſſed the grand clymacterie, be condemned for attempting a part, merely becauſe another is ſuppoſed to perform it with a ſuperior degree of excellence, is a circumſtance incompatible with that candour of which every audience ought to be poſſeſſed.

That Mr. Garrick is the firſt general player in the univerſe will not be denied; but I will venture to

aſſert, that even Mr. Garrick himſelf never did more, (I had almoſt ſaid equal) juſtice to any character of his favourite Shakeſpear, than Mr. Macklin has always done to that of *Shylock*; yet Mr. Yates was never blamed for attempting the part of the Jew of Venice. Why then does the general voice now ſeem to be, that, becauſe the great Roſcius has hitherto been deemed the *moſt* capital performer of Macbeth, therefore poor Macklin ſhall not act at all: And he muſt be hunted from the ſtage for only endeavouring to pleaſe the public, when, I fear, they were predetermined not to like him.

When Mr. Macklin firſt advertiſed that he would attempt this character, it ought to have been conſidered, that this comedian had been long a favourite of the town; that he had merited all the applauſe he had gained; and that his hoary brow was crowned with well-earned laurels.

Whoever remembers to have ſeen (and almoſt every one muſt remember) Mr. Macklin in Sir Archy Mc Sarcaſm, and Sir Gilbert Wrangle, muſt confeſs him to be one of the firſt comedians that this or any age has produced. Let us add to this remark, that Mr. Macklin was himſelf the writer of *Love a-la-Mode*; a piece that has long afforded great entertainment to a judicious and diſcerning public.

Influenced by that humanity which ought to inſpire every one of us when we ſee a fellow-creature injured, I wiſh to convince the play-going part of the world, that a veteran grown grey in their ſervice has been too hardly dealt with; and may they be perſuaded to recal a ſentence which their calmer moments muſt teach them was ſuggeſted by paſſion, and pronounced with unjuſtifiable precipitancy.

For the better inveſtigation of the merit of this affair, a collection follows from what has been advanced in the public prints, *pro* and *con*, which it is pre-

preſumed, will not be unacceptable to the public, as ſo ſerious an iſſue has been the conſequence. The ſelection is made with the utmoſt impartiality; for whatever appeared ſtriking, has been choſen, without regard to which ſide it leaned: and it has alſo been endeavoured to arrange the ſeveral accounts, letters, &c. in the order of their appearance, to prevent confuſion in the *evidence*.

MONDAY, *October* 25.

THE converſation of the town, at leaſt of thoſe who profeſs themſelves lovers of the drama, has for ſome days been much engaged by Mr. *Macklin*'s anounced intention of performing the character of *Macbeth*, in Shakeſpeare's tragedy of that name. We look at his attempt on Saturday evening as the bold endeavour of a veteran actor, to new model, correct and amend the mode of performance of a very important figure in Shakeſpeare's group of characters: the attempt, even if unſucceſsful, is of infinite conſequence to our national drama, and therefore laudable. Mr. Macklin's judgment in theatrical matters is univerſally confeſſed; few performers have done more ſervice, fewer have been ſo theoretically profound. His deſign in the performance of Macbeth was viſibly chaſte, natural, and perfect: his execution in ſome parts of the play equal to his deſign, and ſuperior to almoſt EVERY cotemporary; in others, that inſufficiency of faculties which declining nature is ever accompanied with, was but too apparent. A treacherous memory, an imperfect utterance, a perſon neither elegant, nor full of dignity, and a want of power to vary his features, as frequently as the warring paſſions required, were the moſt obvious of theſe natural and eaſily to be accounted for deficiencies. Throughout the firſt act Mr. Macklin was exceedingly capital; his firſt ſcene of the ſecond, where in his room he argues conſcientiouſly on the ingratitude of the murder of Duncan, was alſo ſingularly excellent. In the dagger ſcene, and thoſe afterwards in which the whirlwind of conflicting paſſions agitate his frame, and create a wildneſs of delivery, his judgment was

loſt ſight of in the vehemence of energetic expreſſion; and, from a want of an occaſionally varied tone, paſſion and obſervation were ſometimes exhibited by ſtage-rant, and a ſententious doling out of the dialogue, which fatigued the ear, and torpified the ſenſes. In a few of the ſcenes Mr. Macklin's failure from his evident deſign produced rather a ridiculous effect. In the laſt act he now and then recovered from that tremulouſneſs of action, and that monotony of rage, which he had been hurried into in the two preceding ones, and the audience confeſſed his merit by loud plaudits. Upon the whole, he ſeemed to have ſtudied the character with peculiar and profound attention; and, had his age and abilities coincided with his judgment, we verily believe he would have performed it with a degree of ſkill unequalled in the theatrical annals. Taking him upon the ground on which he now ſtands, it will be generally confeſſed, that, in the autumn of his life, he gave an inſtance of a poſſeſſion of ſtage requiſites few actors can boaſt in their ſpring; and that, conſidering the many and obvious diſadvantages he laboured under, his performance deſerved our applauſe, nay, it merited our admiration; that he drew a fine out-line none will ſurely deny, or that younger actors may reap great advantages from minutely obſerving the excellencies of his *Macbeth*. His varying his emphaſis, in many ſpeeches of the character, from the hitherto received mode of delivering Macbeth, is a matter too likely to carry us into prolixity for us now to diſcuſs; we thought him in many places, particularly in the line

"Making the *green*, one red"——

critically juſt; we ſhall, however, leave the ſettling the propriety or impropriety of his emphaſis, as we imagine it will turn out—a fertile ſubject for news-paper altercation, coffee-room diſcourſe, and beer-houſe ſquabble.

The alteration in the *jeux de théatre* reſpecting the repreſentation of this tragedy do Mr. Macklin great credit. His change of the ſcenery is peculiarly characteriſtical. The quadrangle of Macbeth's caſtle, and the door which is ſuppoſed to lead to Duncan's apartment, (both of which are intirely new) are additions of conſequence to the exhibition of the play. The door alſo through which Macbeth comes to the weird ſiſters, in the 4th act, is a better

and

and more probable entrance than through the common ſtage portal. The dreſſes are new, elegant, and of a ſort hitherto unknown to a London audience, but exceedingly proper. The Banquet was ſuperbly ſet out, and it muſt be confeſſed that the managers ſeem to have ſpared neither coſt nor aſſiduity to ornament and add to the effect of the repreſentation.

[Morning Chronicle.]

AS none of the critics upon Mr. Macklin's Macbeth, on Saturday night laſt, have as yet had candour enough to acknowledge the *light* which that veteran actor promiſed (and to my mind performed) to throw on that celebrated tragedy, I ſhould think myſelf wanting in juſtice to the *ten years labour* of that *original* critic and actor, not to take the earlieſt and moſt public opportunity of pointing it out; and this I am induced to as much from a principle of doing *juſtice* to Mr. Macklin, as giving an *example* to all young performers, who would *benefit* themſelves from ſo *antique* a model.

In act the ſecond, ſcene the firſt, Shakeſpeare has made Macbeth *murder* Duncan; now Mr. Macklin, being determined to copy from no man, reverſed this incident, and in the very firſt act, ſcene the ſecond, *murdered Macbeth*; the conſequence of which was, the audience, through the whole courſe of the five acts, were intirely eaſed of that *terror* which the poet, in the character of that *animated*, bloody-minded uſurper, meant to impreſs.

[London Evening Poſt.]

ARISTARCHUS.

THE applauſe of the judicious few to Mr. Macklin's Macbeth has encouraged that veteran comedian to perſevere in his plan of teaching the theatrical world how to perform Hamlet and Lear; he is then to entertain the town in the characters of Archer, Benedict, Lothario, Young Bevil; and, when he has learned to dance, in Ranger; and he propoſes, when his years ſhall be ſuited to ſuch characters, to play Maſter Stephen, Tony Lumpkin, the School-boy; and to conclude his theatrical life with playing the Fool.

[St. James's Chronicle.]

THE

THE means that have been taken to prejudice the world againſt one of the juſteſt actors on the ſtage, in his attempt to entertain the public in the character of Macbeth, is of ſo flagrant a nature, that, in my opinion, the lovers of theatrical decency, and of public juſtice, ought to turn their eyes and their animadverſions on the perſon who is ſuſpected to be the cauſe of it all; and on thoſe who are fooliſh and baſe enough to be *his noted agents*; and on others who ſeem to be his unthinking, precipitate volunteers, in ſo inhuman a deſign as the obliging of an actor to decline acting a part, in which he is allowed by all *to be ſecond at leaſt to Mr. Garrick*, and by ſome to be *his equal in many parts of it.*

Now, Sir, as I was *a witneſs to ſome of the attempts of Mr. Garrick's bull-dogs* (as they are called) to damn Mr. Macklin in Macbeth, I think it is but *public juſtice* and common humanity to lay before the public the barbarous treatment *I ſaw him receive from ſome of the people of Drury-lane theatre*, while he was acting Macbeth laſt Saturday night.

I always thought I ſaw more thinking *in Macklin's acting*, more ſenſe in his emphaſis, and ſtronger character in him, than in any other actor I had ever ſeen; therefore I was pleaſed to find, by the papers, that he was to appear *in Macbeth*; and accordingly I went to the gallery of Covent-garden theatre with my family, on Saturday laſt, in order to ſee him act it.

I muſt firſt obſerve, Mr. Printer, that from the graceful and characteriſtic manner in which Macbeth was introduced by the *martial muſic* and military proceſſion, from the manner of *Mr. Macklin's acting*, from his judicious *alteration of the dreſſes*, the diſpoſition of the *ſcene where the King is killed*, the cave of the witches in the 4th act, from the improvement of *Mrs. Hartley's thinking in Lady Macbeth*, and from her manner of ſpeaking, which ſeemed plainly to be the effects of ſome intelligence ſhe had received from *Mr. Macklin*; and, in ſhort, from the whole order and conduct of the play, it was the opinion of all the impartial part of the gallery where I ſat, that the old tragedy of Macbeth had, from theſe alterations and improvements, a ſtrong caſt of a new performance; for which, and for his judicious acting, I thought *Mr. Macklin deſerved great*

praiſe;

praiſe; and indeed this is the opinion of every candid perſon I have heard ſpeak of the night's performance.

But there were half a dozen people in the gallery, not far from where I ſat, and about the ſame number three or four ſeats higher, *all of a party*, who were much diſpleaſed with the whole performance, *particularly with Mr. Macklin*. Theſe men being noiſy in laughing very loud, and in echoing each other's mirth, we, who wiſhed to hear and ſee without interruption, were obliged to be at the trouble of ſilencing them ſeveral times. They dropped their mirth, their loud converſation, and their forced noiſy laughing, but turned their mode of interruption into a *chorus of clandeſtine hiſſing*. I told them it was very rude to hiſs without a cauſe, and requeſted they would deſiſt. They did for a time, but began again. I aſked who it was that was ſo rude? A *gentlewoman* near me pointed at a *ſtaring fellow*, and ſaid it *was he*. I looked at him attentively, and aſked, *pray, Sir, is your name Reddiſh?* He anſwered in the affirmative. I aſked again, *are not you an actor?* He anſwered, yes; what then? Why then, ſays I, it is very improper for *you*, or any perſon *belonging to a theatre*, to take the liberty of *hiſſing any actor*, eſpecially ſo reſpectable a performer *as Mr. Macklin*. He was a little pert, as were ſome of his aſſociates, even to an intolerable ſaucineſs; on which I told him, he *deſerved to be caned*, and turned out of the gallery. The gentleman and his companions (who, as I was told, *were ſome of the appendages of Drury-lane theatre*) behaved very quietly during the reſt of the play.

This, Mr. Printer, is one inſtance, among many that have been practiſed to injure Mr. *Macklin* as an actor. It is ſhameful, nay barbarous; and if it ſhall be found that Mr. GARRICK does not inquire into this matter, and give the public ample ſatisfaction in his cenſure of Mr. REDDISH, he may depend upou it that there are thoſe who will gravely and firmly reſent it; for this is not Mr. Macklin's cauſe, *but the cauſe of the public*; for if the partizans of Mr. *Garrick*, or the people who belong to his theatre, ſhall endeavour to deſtroy the attempts of any actor whatever in his acting a part or parts *that Mr. Garrick acts*, the public ought, and no doubt will conſider it as an *inſolence of the higheſt nature*; a tyranny not only over the actors, but *over the public*.

MANAGERS

MANAGERS may fill pages of the St. James's Chronicle with their *epigrammatical abuſe* upon actors whom they hate, or with *eulogiums* on thoſe whom they have a mind *to puff*, or impoſe upon the public, without being noticed; but even that is baſe in managers; yet it does not interrupt the actor in his performance, nor diſturb the audience in their entertainment or their judgment; but to ſend their people into a theatre, or to ſpirit up their dependants and partizans, to hiſs an actor, and to diſturb an audience, is a policy that deſerves the ſevereſt animadverſion.

One who ſcorns to be of any theatrical party, or to advance a falſehood.

TRUTH.

P. S. It is ſaid, for a certainty, by ſeveral of Mr. *Garrick's friends and admirers*, that he will play *Shylock* this winter, and *Othello*. I am mighty glad to hear it; for, as he is to leave the ſtage after this year's ſervice, he will *crown his fame* by playing theſe *two characters*; and though the excellence of *Mr. Macklin in Shylock* has given him a kind of theatrical property in that character, and of *Mr. Barry* the ſame in *Othello*, yet ſhould they write epigrams againſt *Mr. Garrick* for acting them, or ſend dependents, or ſpirit up partizans *to hiſs him*, I ſhould think they both would deſerve *to be hiſſed off the ſtage themſelves.*

[London Evening Poſt.]

ON Saturday evening the 30th of October, Mr. Macklin appeared for the ſecond time in the character of Macbeth. Before the play began, he came on the ſtage with a roll of news-papers and ſome letters in his hand; he addreſſed the audience in a very ſtrenuous manner, complaining of the illiberal treatment he had met with on his laſt performance of the above part; he expreſſed his ſorrow at the attacks which had been made upon him in the public prints, which he declared he could account for, as there was a *theatrical junto* formed againſt him; Mr. Reddiſh, of Drury-lane, and Mr. Sparks, ſon of the late Mr. Luke Sparks the comedian, he accuſed with heading a party in the gallery to hiſs him; and told the audience the former was taxed with his improper behaviour by the Manager of Drury-

Drury-lane theatre, and *acquitted* of the offence at a ſort of mock trial in the Green-room, but nevertheleſs pledged his faith to prove Mr. Reddiſh had been guilty of the offence. He implored the candid attention of the audience to the execution of the character, and promiſed, if they condemned him upon an impartial hearing, never to *obtrude* a ſimilar attempt upon them again. Mr. Macklin farther added, that though Mr. Reddiſh had been acquitted of the charge, he was ſo thoroughly convinced of his guilt, that he again arraigned him, for intentionally obſtructing the performance the firſt night he had attempted to play the character of Mackbeth.

Mr. Macklin ſaid, that in leſs than a week's time, he would lay the proofs in ſupport of the charge before the tribunal of the public.

Mr. Reddiſh being in the gallery, repeatedly attempted to reply, and began by ſaying, *Why did you on Saturday* — But the audience reſenting his aſſurance, he was not permitted to proceed.

Mr. Macklin concluded his ſpeech, by ſaying, that he defied the tongue of malice to reproach him with having committed a ſingle act during his life, either as a ſervant of the public, or as a private man, which deſerved the cenſure of the community.

His addreſs was received with univerſal applauſe, and he went through the character, accompanied by the repeated plaudits of the ſpectators.

[London Evening Poſt.]

Middleſex, to wit, NOtwithſtanding the vindication I thought my duty to the public compelled me to make of my innocence, reſpecting the charge which appeared againſt me in the Morning Chronicle of Wedneſday laſt, and to which I ſigned my name, corroborated by the atteſtation of the only gentleman I knew, or ſpoke to, during the performance of Macbeth,—Mr. Macklin, I am informed, laſt night, in a moſt unprecedented manner, falſely accuſed me of heading a party to hiſs and diſconcert him in his buſineſs, and publicly declared he would bring inconteſtible proof of the fact.

I do therefore ſolemnly declare, and make oath, that I went to the play on Saturday laſt, the 23d of October,

accompanied by Mr. James Sparks, whom I accidentally met that afternoon—that I neither *hiſſed*, nor ſhewed any other public mark of diſapprobation, during the whole performance; nor was I ſpoken to by any perſon or perſons during the play, or while I continued in the theatre, but Mr. James Sparks.

SAM. REDDISH.

Sworn before me this 31ſt of
October, 1773.
SAMP. WRIGHT.

And I challenge Mr. Macklin, notwithſtanding his declaration, to produce any perſon of credit to prove the contrary. I ſhall deſiſt from troubling the public any further on this matter, only begging leave to obſerve, that, as I conſidered this moſt wicked and groundleſs charge was meant deeply to injure my character and livelihood, I took every poſſible means to be brought face to face with my accuſer, well aſſured he muſt be convinced of his error by a perſonal interview, which, after having the ſtrongeſt reaſon to hope I ſhould be indulged with, I was laſt night abſolutely refuſed.

[Morning Chronicle.] SAM. REDDISH.

Middleſex, to wit, AN anonymous paragraph appearing in the paper of Wedneſday laſt, falſely accuſing Mr. Reddiſh with behaving improperly at the play on Saturday the 23d of October, he called on me to refute ſo infamous a charge, which I thought it my duty, from motives of juſtice and truth, to do, and ſigned it with my name and place of abode. Notwithſtanding which, I am told Mr. Macklin, in a very unbecoming manner, thought proper, laſt night, at the theatre, to make uſe of my name, and flatly contradicted my aſſertion of Mr. Reddiſh's innocence:

I do therefore, upon my oath, declare that Mr. Reddiſh, with whom I went that night to the play, unaccompanied by any other perſon or perſons, neither hiſſed nor ſhewed any other public mark of diſapprobation, during our ſtay in the theatre. On the contrary, when I once hiſſed, and once only, and thought myſelf juſtifiable in diſapproving a ridiculous circumſtance that occurred, and was attended with

with a general laugh, Mr. Reddiſh warmly requeſted, *on his account*, my forbearance; to which I aſſented; and that a perſon ſitting on my left hand, a little behind me, did, on my ſhewing ſuch diſapprobation, ſpeak to, and aſk *me* the reaſon of it, but not Mr. *Reddiſh*; on which I rebuked him; as I thought I, or any other gentleman, had a right to do, that was not a ſervant to the public.

JAs. SPARKS.

Sworn before me, this 31ſt of October, 1773.

SAMP. WRIGHT.

[Morning Chronicle.]

THERE is in many of our Species a malignity and envy ever watchful to ſeize an opportunity of depreciating thoſe few happy favourites of Heaven, whom genius and fortune equally conſpire to diſtinguiſh from the reſt of mankind. He, therefore, who with an honeſt zeal ſteps forth in defence of eminent talents and virtue, when they are aſperſed by malevolence, and brands with juſt infamy the preſumption and Falſehood of the traducer, will not, I flatter myſelf, be deemed impertinent by an enlightened and generous public.

The ſpeech, which Mr. Macklin made in Covent-Garden theatre on Saturday the 30th of October, muſt excite ſome indignation in every reader who is acquainted with Mr. Garrick's unrivalled abilities and amiable qualities. Minutely to examine all its mean art, arrogance, ſophiſtry, and nonſenſe, would be an inſult to the diſcernment of the town. I ſhall only animadvert on a few paſſages of it; my obſervations, I hope, will rectify any wrong opinions which may have been formed from the whole; and perhaps they will make it's author repent that he ever pronounced it, if he is capable of ingenuous regret.

I muſt now remark to your readers (but even here, I am afraid I ſhall offend their ſagacity) that wherever Mr. Macklin, in his ſpeech, mentions Mr. Garrick, the inference which he plainly wiſhes to have drawn from the paragraph, is, that Mr. Garrick frets at Mr. Macklin's powers in playing Macbeth, and, though *crowned ſhadowed with Laurels*, ſickens at the ſight of this formidable rival.

They, who can ſuppoſe that Mr. Garrick is ſo weak as to form a party againſt Mr. Macklin in his theatrical capacity, muſt conclude that he is already ſunk in dotage, long before the uſual time of our ſecond infancy; and that his dotage is only equalled by Mr. Macklin's, who, without ever having poſſeſſed abilities adequate to his enterprize, and deep in the wane of life, has attempted the character of Macbeth.

Malignant inſinuation, which, like the ſhades of night, magnifies its objects, is a ſure mark of a ſordid and deſpicable mind. Mr. Macklin, by repeated implications, which are as palpable as a downright charge, and, if they had the force of many implications, would be more miſchievous, has accuſed Mr. Garrick, and his friends, of endeavouring abſurdly and inhumanely to mar the harmleſs, though Quixotic adventure of an old actor. But I can aſſure the public, from the moſt indiſputable information, that neither Mr. Garrick nor his *admirers* ever thought of moleſting our hardy veteran in his *uſurpation of the crown of Scotland.*

I can likewiſe aſſure the public, and Mr. Macklin, that Mr. Reddiſh did not hiſs him while he was playing Macbeth; and therefore, I defy him to prove that he *did.*

I am well informed that Mr. Sparks hiſſed Mr. Macklin, and that Sparks was checked by Mr. Reddiſh for his indiſcretion. This latter circumſtance, however, I do not relate with abſolute confidence. I ſhould be loth to miſlead the public in the ſmalleſt inſtance while I am arraigning Mr. Macklin for diſingenuity, at *their* tribunal.

I am by no means attached to the fortune of Mr. Reddiſh, to whom I never ſpoke, but truth is ſacred, eſpecially where credit given to its reverſe might endanger the ſubſiſtence of any individual. I well know, that if Mr. Reddiſh had hiſſed Mr. Macklin, his groſs impropriety of behaviour would have been at leaſt as warmly reſented by Mr. Garrick as by the town. But he is innocent of the accuſation brought againſt him, therefore, as a man, he has a right to every poſſible exculpation.

Mr. Macklin ſhould tremble while he reads this part of my letter. For if he cannot prove his charge againſt Reddiſh, it will be productive to himſelf of all the infamy that he wiſhed the man to feel, whom he has wantonly made his enemy. The *onus probandi* lies upon him, and it will

cruſh

cruſh that reputation of unerring moral rectitude during a long life, which with a ſingular preſumption he has publickly claimed, and with a bold defiance to the moſt inquiſitive and ſevere cenſure. A modern player, and one who is not highly eſteemed as a man, arrogates a pre-eminence in virtue above an Epictetus, or a Cato, thoſe glorious luminaries of the divine Stoical ſect.

Mr. Macklin's ſkill in theatrical criticiſms is as rare as his probity. I refer the reader to a curious paragraph in his ſpeech, by which he would perſuade his audience that thoſe ſtrong and noble feelings which are eſſential qualities on the ſtage, and which he more plainly than modeſtly intimates that he himſelf poſſeſſes; that thoſe feelings, by which the player participates the genius and inſpiration of his poet, are of great diſadvantage to him when he exhibits a capital character, and produce effects, which, it muſt be owned, are ſtrange and unaccountable. They arreſt his memory, make his voice hoarſe, render his cadence improper, and embarraſs his action. In that, thoſe principal theatrical qualities, according to the new light in which Mr. Macklin views them, are attended with conſequences diametrically oppoſite to thoſe which have been long aſcribed to them by nature and common ſenſe. But, as I never embrace an opinion merely on account of its novelty, I ſhall, in this very clear caſe, abide by old and trite obſervations. I need not fear the imputation of abſurdly contradicting the eſtabliſhed ſentiments of mankind in all ages, on a point which admits no diſpute, when I aſſert that the forcible, the irreſiſtible enthuſiaſm kindled at the altar of Shakeſpeare, is the great cauſe of an actor's univerſal excellence. It invigorates the memory; it gives eaſe, and grace to the perſon; to every geſture, to every attitude, to every motion. It gives proper flexibility and harmony to the voice; it enforces every ſentence, every word, every articulation. What I advance I could ſupport by a living and moſt illuſtrious example: but, my theory needs no proof; and my reader, of himſelf, will here think of Mr. Garrick.

Whatever expreſſions in this letter bear honourable teſtimony to the moral character of that great man, proceed from the unreſerved credit which every liberal perſon gives to reputable authority, when it informs us that genius of the firſt magnitude is dignified by virtue. A mind in the leaſt

leaſt degree curious and active, naturally enquires into the private life of an eminent cotemporary. It is particularly prompted to make this enquiry with regard to Mr. Garrick, whom, I think, we may pronounce, without hyperbole, the greateſt actor that ever exiſted; whoſe greatneſs is often exhibited with all its powers to the world; who is often ſurrounded with many inferiors in his own profeſſion; who is often under the diſagreeable neceſſity of rejecting the productions of confident ſtupidity; and who is therefore daily ſubject to the aſperſions of the ſplenetic, the envious, and the diſappointed. For dulneſs, tho' its intellect is cold, has the fire of reſentment.

Mr. Macklin's ſpeech ſtimulated me to a more induſtrious enquiry than I had ever made into Mr. Garrick's moral merit, and I am aſſured by very reſpectable gentlemen who are intimately acquainted with him, and by actors, that he is a benevolent man; and that he has always encouraged every degree of merit, either dramatic or theatrical, that ſolicited his protection, with great humanity and ardour.

But let us admit that his heart is bad. What opinion ſhould we form of his head, if the calumny thrown out againſt him was true? Is it credible to the loweſt underſtanding, that Mr. Garrick, who poſſeſſes good ſenſe at leaſt, and who has had the greateſt opportunities of acquiring Prudence, both from the drama and from life; is it credible that *he* ſhould be induſtrious to cruſh Mr. Macklin, from whom he has nothing to fear?—that he ſhould be agitated like Dr. Young's

——Ocean into Tempeſt wrought,
To waft a Feather, or to drown a Fly?

that he ſhould fully the luſtre of a long-eſtabliſhed fame, by a ſtrenuous oppoſition, equally abſurd and malicious? Mr. Macklin, who I am ſatisfied does not himſelf believe that Mr. Garrick is capable of the weak, the childiſh malevolence which he imputes to him, found that he was ſinking in the eye of the public under the grandeur of Macbeth, and endeavoured, by an acute ſtratagem, to impreſs them with a high idea of his merit. He gave them to underſtand, that Mr. Garrick's opinion was very different from theirs, for that he was jealous of his excellence

in

in his new character. The trick, I will allow, was an artful ſtroke of theatrical legerdemain. It was ſo ſubtle, and ſo weak, that it would have been eſteemed a *coup de maitre* by an Italian politician.

[St. James's Chronicle.] QUINTILIAN.

A Summary of the tranſactions of Mr. REDDISH, *Comedian, concerning the charge of his having hiſſed* Mr. MACKLIN, *in the character of* MACBETH.

MR. Macklin was not conſcious that any offence could ariſe to any perſon whatſoever, from his acting Macbeth. He knew the taſk was arduous; but he knew ſomething of his own judgment, of his knowledge of Shakeſpeare, and of the different actors who had acted Macbeth, Richard, Othello, Lear, &c. for ſome years paſt. He had ſeen that the public bore with them; indulged and encouraged them to do better if they could; Mr. Macklin too had many years enjoyed the ſame bleſſings from this benevolent public, and thought they would have been continued to him in common with others of their theatrical ſervants. He was not diſappointed; the public at large indulged, encouraged, and defended him from an oppreſſion unknown in the annals of any theatre, ancient or modern; for which he feels, and *ever ſhall*, a gratitude as warm as ever animated the ſpirit of man, to the higheſt *deeds of retribution*. It is *this* kind of protection that keeps the Britiſh conſtitution in *heart and vigour*; it is *this kind of protection that* ever has ſtood up *againſt oppreſſion*; *that* ever *has*, and ever *will* repel, and *conquer it:* and he who does not *feel this ſpirit*, is not worthy to enjoy it. It is that which ſets the Britiſh ſubject in a ſafety above all others in this mortal ſtate; by *that*, and that *only*, we live *free*; and *for that*, it will ever be an Engliſhman's *beſt policy* to reſolve, and his higheſt glory *to die*.

I am ſenſible that this ſpirit of gratitude will be deemed, by ſome certain choice news-paper geniuſes, a ſpecies of bombaſt; be it ſo; it is a text for the talent of proſe ridicule; and for the theatrical epigramatic muſe, who ever holds her dagger concealed, but ready in the dark to ſtrike the blow into the life of rival reputation. The anſwer to ſuch geniuſes is obvious; thoſe who *cannot feel*, cannot believe

lieve or conceive that *ſuch* gratitude or *ſpirit* exiſts; not to *them*, but thoſe who *know me*, and who *can feel*, I appeal; and thoſe, I am ſure, will always pardon the exceſcence for the ſounder part of a grateful intention.

On Saturday the 23d of October, Mr. *Macklin* appeared in the character of *Macbeth*. After the play was over, he was informed that Mr. *Reddiſh* and one *Sparks*, with many others, who ſeemed to be of their party, hiſſed Mr. Macklin.

On the Monday following, it was announced in the papers to be acted again on Saturday the 30th; on which, the news-papers *invited* the public to *hiſs* Mr. Macklin off the ſtage; and beſides this invitation of the public papers, he had intelligence, that Mr. *Sparks's family*, their connections, and many of thoſe who are called "The friends of a certain actor," were all determined to make a violent effort on the ſecond night of his acting *Macbeth*, to demoliſh him.

In this cruel ſituation, *Macklin* reſolved not to be tried by *news paper judges*; Mr. Sparks's family, nor the *lurking partizans of an actor*; but by that *tribunal* that never has been known to be on the *cruel* or the *partial* ſide, but always on the *merciful* and the *juſt:* therefore, before the play began, *Macklin* went upon the ſtage in his own character, told his caſe, made his charge, pledged himſelf to prove it, and implored the protection of the public, while he was acting in their ſervice: they applauded and granted it.

On Monday Nov. 1ſt, Mr. *Reddiſh* and Mr. *Sparks*, made each an affidavit that *Mr.* Reddiſh did not *hiſs Macklin*. To this, *Macklin* is ſilent.

On the 4th, *Redaiſh calls on Macklin* for proofs o his accuſation: ſtill *Macklin* is ſilent.

His reaſon was this: Had *Mr. Reddiſh* and *Mr. Sparks* confined their defence, to *bare affirmation*, *Mr. Macklin* would have produced his proofs as ſoon as they could be collected; but when theſe Gentlemen had, in the moſt *awful*, *ſolemn* manner, that *religion*, *wiſdom*, and *legal obligation* could deviſe, called their CREATOR to witneſs *their truth*, in this buſineſs; I ſhuddered, and thought *Mr.* Reddiſh and *Mr.* Sparks's condition to be of a *moſt tremendous nature*, as I conceived the evidence I even then poſſeſſed, which was not the whole, *would prove them perjured.*

On

On this I paused; consulted some very grave, thinking persons; they advised me, in compassion to these young men, and for my own sake, to wait a few days, to try if some *palliative* could be contrived to save them from the mortal disease of PERJURY being proved against them; I consented, and had thoughts of applying to *Mr. Garrick*, and of *shewing him* my evidence of their *guilt* and PERJURY, in order to try if any expedient of alleviation could be started in their favour.

But being obliged to act on Saturday last, *Mr.* Reddish's friends, for still I say he has *friends*. were most clamorous to have the proofs; and when they found I had them, and produced them, they would not hear them all;—what they did hear, they disbelieved; because they were not on oath; but they believe *Mr.* Reddish and *Mr.* Sparks's oath against the testimony of five persons of known veracity.

Mr. Reddish himself writes me a letter of most provoking matter; and in terms that add virulence and insolence to *that matter*; daring me to produce my proofs *upon oath*, and threatening, but for my age, my cowardice with chastisement, or my courage with a duel. Most gallant! noble! merciful youth!

But I will return his mercy; he *shall not* be answered upon oath; Reddish and Sparks will then have a loop-hole to escape the stigma of perjury; their friends then may argue that Reddish did not hiss, because *he* himself, and Sparks, have sworn it; and five reputable witnesses have only affirmed that he did; and sure one oath from such a *gentleman* as Mr. Reddish, or Mr. Sparks, must outweigh a whole theatre of the most *credible testimonies* that are only on affirmation.

Be it so, Gentlemen; all the advantage I desire to draw from my witnesses on affirmation is, that my charge was not groundless, hasty, nor intemperate; nor my resentment malignant, but merciful. My witnesses are people of unblemished characters; they offered to affirm upon oath what they have thus asserted; but I would not let them swear; I knew their not swearing would weaken their testimony in your opinions, and in the arguments of your friends; that was the very effect I foresaw and desired. Make your advantage of it; if you can escape from the imputation of perjury only by their not affirming upon oath, enjoy that happiness. But remember, if ever I

hear any more of this buſineſs, their oaths will be produced in due form of legal ceremony.

CHARLES MACKLIN.

James-ſtreet, Covent Garden,
Nov. 11, 1773.

The following are the proofs Mr. Macklin wiſhed to produce laſt Saturday, and on which he reſts the validity of his pledge to the public.

Mr. VIVIAN's *Narrative.*

JOSIAH VIVIAN, of Mitcham, in the county of Surry, ſays, that on Saturday the 23d of October, he, in company with Elizabeth Macklin, Samuel Story, and Mr. Skinner, of New-ſtreet, Covent-garden, went into the gallery at Covent garden theatre, to ſee the tragedy of Macbeth; that he ſat next to Mrs. Macklin on the third or fourth row, or thereabouts; that he heard hiſſing behind him; that, particularly when Mr. Macklin was ſpeaking to the Doctor, he heard hiſſing on Mrs. Macklin's right hand alſo, and, as he believes, from people who ſat on the ſame bench near Mrs. Macklin; that Mrs. Macklin did point out a man as a hiſſer who ſat within two perſons of her, on the ſame bench: on which, Mr. Skinner called out, "Who is it that hiſſes?"—Mrs. Macklin anſwered, "This is the man that hiſſes," pointing at a perſon, who I am informed is Mr. Sparks; but whom I do not perſonally know.

"Mr. Skinner then ſtood up and aſked Sparks, "What do you hiſs at?" to which the man, whom I underſtand to be Sparks, replied, "What is that to you? I will hiſs at whom I pleaſe," or words to that effect.

"To Sparks's anſwer, Mr. Skinner ſaid, "I know you, there is a party of you come on purpoſe." At this time Mrs. Macklin cried out "there is Mr. Reddiſh, he is the perſon that has been hiſſing all night; he too is come to hiſs!" She then aſked Mr. Skinner, and Mr. Vivian, if they knew Mr. Reddiſh. Mr. Vivian anſwered, "It is Mr. Reddiſh, I know him by ſight very well," or words to that effect; "and it is very wrong in him to hiſs a brother actor, when the compliment may be returned at the expence of a ſhilling."

"*Mr.*

" Mr. Vivian further ſays, he obſerved that when the prompter was heard in giving the word, and on other occaſions, he ſaw Mr. Reddiſh make faces, ſhrug up his ſhoulders, ſhake his head, and utter exclamatory ſounds of contempt, and of ſcornful pity, in ſuch a manner as people generally uſe when they ſhew diſguſt, or wiſh to excite hiſſing in a playhouſe, as I conceive."

JOSIAH VIVIAN.

Mr. STORY's *Narrative.*

" SAMUEL STORY ſays, that on Saturday the 23d of October, he, in company with Elizabeth Macklin, Joſiah Vivian, and Mr. Skinner of New-ſtreet, Covent Garden, went to the theatre at Covent Garden, to ſee the play of Macbeth; that he ſat on the fifth row, as he believes, behind Mrs. Macklin and Mr. Vivian; that ſeveral times through the acting of the play, he heard hiſſing, behind, two or three benches above him, and on the right hand of Mrs. Macklin and Mr. Vivian; that when Mr. Macklin was ſpeaking to the Doctor, he heard hiſſing behind him, and on the right hand of Mrs. Macklin and Mr. Vivian particularly; that when Mr. Skinner aſked, " Who is that that hiſſes?" Mrs. Macklin anſwered, " This is the man that hiſſes," pointing to a perſon, who, as Mr. Story was informed, goes by the name of Sparks.—Mr. Skinner ſtood up and aſked this Sparks,—" What do you hiſs at? to which he replied, " What is that to you? we will hiſs at whom we pleaſe," or words to that effect.

To Mr. Sparks's anſwer, Mr. Skinner ſaid, " I know you—there is a party of you come on purpoſe." At this time Mrs. Macklin cried out, " There is Mr. Reddiſh, I believe! he is one of the perſons who has been hiſſing all night, he too is come to hiſs." Mrs. Macklin aſked Mr. Story if he knew Mr. Reddiſh, he anſwered, " perfectly well, by ſight." " Is that he?" Mr. Story anſwered, " Yes." When the Prompter was heard, and on other occaſions, Mr. Story obſerved that Mr. Reddiſh did make faces, ſhrug up his ſhoulders, ſhake his head, and utter exclamatory ſounds of contempt, and of ſcornful pity, in ſuch a manner as people generally uſe when they ſhew diſguſt, or when they wiſh to excite hiſſing in a play-houſe.

SAMUEL STORY.

Mr. SKINNER's *Narrative.*

" ON Saturday the 23d of October, Mrs. Macklin came to my houſe in New-ſtreet, Covent Garden, to drink tea. Mr. Vivian and Mr. Story, both of Mitcham, in Surry, came there alſo about the ſame time; they were not previouſly acquainted with Mrs. Macklin, notwithſtanding we all four went into the gallery at Covent Garden theatre to ſee the tragedy of Macbeth. Mrs. Macklin and Mr. Vivian ſat about four rows from the front of the gallery; Mr. Story and myſelf ſat together on the bench behind them. Several times, through four acts of the play, I heard hiſſing behind me, on which I whiſpered to Mrs. Macklin, " that there were hiſſers, and bid her watch to find them out." In the fifth act, when Mr. Macklin was ſpeaking to the Doctor, the audience were very ſilent, which ſilence was interrupted by the hiſſing of people on the right hand of Mrs. Macklin. On this, Mr. Skinner cried out, " who are thoſe a hiſſing?" or words to that effect; Mrs. Macklin, pointing at a man within two of her on the ſame bench, anſwered, " here is a gentleman hiſſing. I ſtarted up, and aſked the man, " what is it you hiſs at?" The man ſtarted up likewiſe, and anſwered, " what is that to you? we will hiſs at whom we pleaſe." The perſon who thus hiſſed was one Sparks, as I have been informed by thoſe who ſaid they knew him.

Another man behind, about two or three benches higher, cried out, " ſo, we muſt not hiſs, we will hiſs at you if we like it," or words to that effect; whereupon I replied, " I know you all, there is a party of you come on purpoſe."

" Juſt about this time Mrs. Macklin called out, " there is Reddiſh, I believe; he too I find is come to hiſs." She then aſked, " do you know him, Mr. Skinner?" I (Skinner) ſtept down to the bench on which Mr. Reddiſh ſat, looked in his face and anſwered, that I knew him very well on the ſtage, but did not know him off the ſtage. Mrs. Macklin then aſked Mr. Vivian, if *he* knew Mr. Reddiſh off the ſtage; he anſwered, " perfectly well; ſhe aſked, " is that he;" Mr. Vivian ſaid " yes." Mrs. Macklin obſerved that it was very ſtrange that Mr. Reddiſh ſhould come to hiſs when Macbeth was not his part; and Mr. Vivian too remarked, that " it was very wrong in Mr. Reddiſh to hiſs a brother actor, as the compliment might be returned

at ſo ſmall an expence as a ſhilling," or words to that effect. Mrs. Macklin then aſked Mr. Story, if *he* knew Mr. Reddiſh off the ſtage? he anſwered, "yes." She aſked, "is that he? he anſwered again, "yes." During which altercation and enquiry about Mr. Reddiſh, and the remarks on his behaviour, Mr. Reddiſh made no kind of defence; but ſat ſilent all the reſt of the night, as did Mr. Sparks; and when the play was over, they went away together.

Mr. Skinner, and Mrs. Macklin went out of the gallery together. Mr. Skinner aſked the gallery door-keeper, if Mr. Reddiſh was gone out, he was anſwered, *no*. Mrs. Macklin then ſaid to the door-keeper, "He ſoon will go out; he has been hiſſing all night." This is the ſubſtance, and as near as I can remember, the words that paſſed in this affair.

KEVENHULLER SKINNER.

An anonymous Letter ſent to Mr. Macklin.

SIR,

"Being an enemy to oppreſſion, and not doubting that Mr. Reddiſh did really hiſs on your firſt appearance in Macbeth, I tranſmit to you the ſubſtance of a converſation that paſſed next morning between Mr. Martin, an attorney, who is in the Cuſtos Brevium Office, in the Inner Temple, and Mr. Taſker, who is in a merchant's counting-office in the city.

"I heard Mr. Taſker declare, that on the Sunday morning he was in company with Mr. Martin, who expreſſed ſome *indignation* at what had paſſed in the gallery the preceding night. Mr. Taſker affirmed, that Mr. Martin declared, that Mr. Reddiſh (who was in company with others) behaved during the performance, in a very *improper, unbecoming*, and *indecent manner*, turning up his noſe, and *hiſſing as loudly as any body in the houſe*. An altercation enſued upon the propriety of Mr. Reddiſh's conduct, and the indecency of interrupting the performance, in which, I underſtand Mr. Reddiſh *was ſo prudent as to be paſſive*, and to diſtinguiſh himſelf *no more during the reſt of the performance*, though his friends retained their ſpirit.

I am,

Your humble Servant,

Saturday evening. A. B."

Mr.

[Mr. Martin, it ſeems, ſat very near to that part of the gallery where Mr. Reddiſh and his friends were ſeated.

Mr. Macklin waited on Mr. Martin, read this letter to him, during which time Mr. Martin ſmiled, and aſſented to every part of it, till he came to the paſſage of *hiſſing as loud as any body in the houſe*—to that Mr. Martin objected, ſaying, "that he could not aſſert that Mr. Reddiſh hiſſed, becauſe he ſat behind him, therefore could not ſee his face;" but all the reſt of the letter he allowed to be exactly as it happened. Upon this occaſion, for the ſake of truth, Mr. Macklin refers his readers to Mr. Taſker, for an explanation of Mr. *Martin's indignation* at Mr. Reddiſh's conduct which is expreſſed in the anonymous letter.]

Mrs. MACKLIN's *Narrative.*

On Saturday the 23d of October, Elizbeth Macklin, of James-ſtreet, Covent Garden, wife of Charles Macklin, comedian, went to Mr. Skinner's in New-ſtreet, Covent Garden, to drink tea; and there ſhe ſaw Mr. Vivian and Mr. Story, of whom ſhe had not the leaſt knowledge before. They all went together to Covent Garden theatre to ſee the tragedy of Macbeth. She ſat on the fourth bench of the gallery from the front of it, as ſhe believes, with Mr. Vivian on her left hand, Mr. Skinner and Mr. Story on the bench behind her. She ſays, that ſeveral times during four acts of the play, ſhe heard hiſſing by a party, about three or four benches behind her; and by others on her right hand, ſeemingly on or near the bench ſhe ſat on. But as the hiſſing on her right hand for four acts was only when there was an applauſe, ſhe could not diſtinguiſh clearly who, or where, exactly, the perſons were who hiſſed. Mr. Skinner whiſpered Mrs. Macklin, that there were ſome people not far from them who hiſſed. On which ſhe reſolved to be particularly watchful on that party on her right hand, whence ſhe thought the hiſſing came; and in the fifth act, when Mr. Macklin was ſpeaking to the Doctor, (the audience then being very ſilent) ſhe was ſuddenly ſurprized by two diſtinct kinds of hiſſing on her right hand, within two or three perſons of her, and on the very bench on which ſhe ſat, as ſhe then inſtantly thought; and on looking to know for certain, whence the hiſſing came, ſhe ſaw a man, whoſe name is Sparks, as ſhe is informed, with

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one hand edgeways on each ſide of his mouth, who hiſſed in a very loud and uncommon manner; the ſound of which hiſſing he interrupted and varied, by cloſing and opening his hands, as the hiſſing came from his mouth; which interruption made it very diſtinguiſhable from the ſound of the hiſs that came from the perſon who ſat next to him on his right hand; for that hiſs on Sparks's right hand was in the ordinary tones, without any interruption. And ſhe further ſays, that at that point of time the different ſounds were the eaſier to be diſtinguiſhed, as the audience were quite ſilent; and as the two hiſſings were unaccompanied by any other noiſe to confound them, or interrupt hearing.

"Mr. Skinner on hearing this hiſſing, called out; "Who are thoſe a hiſſing." Mrs. Macklin directly pointed at Sparks, who ſat the third perſon from her, and anſwered, "Here is a gentleman hiſſing." Mr. Skinner ſtarted up and aſked him, "What is it you hiſs at?" Sparks likewiſe ſtarted up, and replied, "What is that to you? we will hiſs at whom we pleaſe." At this inſtant another perſon, two or three benches higher, ſupported Sparks, by bawling out, "We will hiſs at what we pleaſe: we will hiſs at you (meaning Mr. Skinner) if we like it;" or words to that effect. *Mr.* Skinner anſwered, "I know you all, you are a party come on purpoſe." Upon Mr. Sparks's ſtanding up, Mrs Macklin tried to ſee the other perſon who had hiſſed, and who had kept himſelf cloſe and from the light in the ſhade of the gallery, and concealed behind Mr. Sparks till the diſpute in the fifth act happened: but Sparks by ſtanding up, being removed from intercepting her ſight, ſhe at once thought ſhe ſaw Reddiſh, and cried out, "here is Reddiſh, I believe, and he is the perſon, if it be Reddiſh, who has been hiſſing all night;" for as Reddiſh, upon ſtanding up, had ſlunk back from the light, and from her inſpection, as far as he could, ſhe was not certain, that it was Reddiſh; therefore, ſhe aſked Mr. Skinner, if he knew Redniſh? *Mr.* Skinner ſtept down to the bench Reddiſh ſat on, looked full in his face, and anſwered, that he knew him very well when he was upon the ſtage, but did not know him off it. *Mrs.* Macklin being uncertain, ſhe aſked Mr. Vivian if he knew Mr. Reddiſh off the ſtage? he anſwered, "perfectly." She aſked, pointing to him, "Is that he? he ſaid, Yes." She then aſked Mr. Story if he knew Mr. Reddiſh off the ſtage? he

he anſwered "Yes." She asked "Is that he? Mr. Story again anſwered, "Yes." Mrs. Macklin then obſerved, it was very wonderful that Mr. Reddiſh ſhould hiſs Mr. Macklin, as Macbeth was not his part: and Mr. Vivian remarked, that in his opinion Mr. Reddiſh was very wrong in hiſſing his brother actor, as the compliment might be returned at ſo trifling an expence as a ſhilling, or words to that effect. During this altercation between Mr. Sparks and Mr. Skinner, and during the enquiry about the perſon of Mr. Reddiſh, and the remarks on his conduct, Mr. Reddiſh made no defence, nor opened his lips for the remainder of the play, according to her obſervation on him, and Mr Sparks was as ſilent. When the play was over, they went away together.

Mr. Skinner, as he went out of the gallery door, aſked if Mr. Reddiſh was gone out? he was anſwered, "No." Mrs. Macklin told the door-keeper, he would ſoon go out, and that he had been hiſſing all night.

By this ſelection from the public prints, it is to be hoped the reader has obtained a competent inſight into the riſe and progreſs of the preſent diſpute between Mr. Macklin and *originally*, another player, but *now*, I bluſh to ſay, the town; as they have acted, not with the cool diſpaſſionate integrity of judges, but with the warmth and prepoſſeſſion of party.—But what is the ſum of the evidence againſt the delinquent devoid of declamation? That he accuſed Mr. Reddiſh with being one of a body who interrupted and hiſſed his performance of the character of Macbeth. Here indeed, it muſt be obſerved, that Mr. Macklin is chiefly blameable for truſting too much to the wrong information of his friends; for this has been the ſource of his preſent misfortune. They were miſtaken as to the perſon who hiſſed, and thought it to be Mr. Reddiſh; and Macklin believed all that they had told him. It does not appear that there was the leaſt intention to charge Mr. Reddiſh falſly. All, then, that this baniſhed

player

player can fairly be blamed for, originated from miſtake, to which as we are all liable, we ought all to be ready to forgive. It is not pretended to VINDICATE and entirely EXCULPATE him from this charge, but to plead in PALLIATION of it, by contending that it was by no means provocative of the miſchief which has enſued. Which of us can be certain of not having purſued in his ſituation, a ſimilar conduct? Let us reflect upon the facility with which the tales of his friends were likely to be credited. 'Tis undeniable that many perſons went to the playhouſe, to ſee his firſt appearance in the character of Macbeth, full of prejudice and prepoſſeſſion, perhaps pique, and fully determined to DAMN him; I ſay, that many did attend Mr. Macklin when firſt he acted the character of Macbeth, with this intent, is undeniable, from the previous inflammatory letters which appeared in the papers. Upon finding that an attempt had been made to ridicule and interrupt his performance, which he was conſcious did not deſerve ſuch treatment, it was but natural to enquire whence it aroſe, and who his opponents were. The preſumptive proofs which his friends, and particularly his wife, now crowded upon him, were (without wonder) at that time ſufficient to work up ſuſpicion into belief. It even now is evident, that there was hiſſing and other opprobrious marks of DAMNATION in the gallery, which iſſued from a party where Mr. Reddiſh ſat;—nay, Mr. Sparks, who accompanied Mr. Reddiſh, and ſat next to him, has avowed that he himſelf did hiſs. It is clear then, that there were not only plauſible, but ſubſtantial grounds for ſuſpicion; and ſuch as, I am perſuaded, few would not, with Mr. Macklin, have built a charge upon. I wiſh his conduct had been leſs natural, and more cautious. Unfortunately for him, his friends were too indiſcriminate, and erroneouſly gave up Mr. Reddiſh's name inſtead of Mr. Sparkes's. This has been the

great cauſe of poor Macklin's miſcarriage, the ſhoal againſt which he has ſplit headlong. But ſhall a man, for too eaſily giving credit to his FRIENDS, become the prey of his deſigning ENEMIES? Forbid it, Candor; forbid it, JUSTICE! The perſons who had commenced the outcry, taking advantage of the unlucky miſtake, redoubled their efforts to ſtir up the publick clamour againſt the object of their envy; their vociferations in the playhouſe ſilenced the ſtill voices of the unprejudiced, and the means which Mr. Macklin's friends took in his ſupport, they aggravated in the publick prints with thouſands of miſrepreſentations. Hence, becoming incenſed, the latter proceeded in the retort, and ſome ill-adviſed ſteps appear to have been taken, which, as I mean not to miſlead the public, I ſhall not attempt to juſtify But let not their prudence be borne down by factious turbulency. The affair in diſcuſion has been artfully worked up to its unhappy upſhot. By a little more moderation on either ſide, it would have terminated happily; a candid eclairciſſement at firſt would have prevented the ſad confuſion at laſt; Mr. Reddiſh's honour would have been equally unblemiſhed, and Mr. Macklin would have ſtill continued to improve and adorn the ſtage, by his appearance thereon in Macbeth and other capital characters.

I cannot drop this point without laying a little further ſtreſs upon the reaſonable grounds there were for a ſuſpicion of Mr. Reddiſh. Whoever reads with an unprejudiced mind the narratives which Mr. Macklin intended to have laid before the audience on the third night of his appearance in Macbeth, will be almoſt as ready to ſuppoſe Mr. Reddiſh's guilt, as Macklin himſelf; indeed, circumſtances were ſo ſtrong againſt him, that nothing but a ſolemn declaration by affidavit could acquit him.

'Tis

'Tis upon the ſuppoſition of Mr. Macklin's firm perſuaſion that the intelligence of his friends was true, that I plead in his behalf. He cannot be imagined to have perſiſted in wilful error; which would have been the height of abſurdity as well as inſolence. No, he had fallen into a fatal miſtake, by the ſame means which might have miſled the beſt of us, and therefore the *beſt of us* ought to forgive him.

But (with due deference be it ſpoken) there is ſtrong reaſon to believe that the audience which paſſed ſo ſevere a cenſure on Mr. Macklin did not entirely conſiſt of the *beſt of people*. They made, indeed, a loud clamour about rigid juſtice, but at the ſame time forgot there was ſuch a duty as common honeſty: for it is a *fact*, that many of the moſt noiſy of theſe *cenſors* came into the houſe with orders on purpoſe to *dam the dog*, as they expreſſed it, and had the *honeſty* to take three ſhillings at the pit door as they went out; and that others, who had paid at the pit door, got into the boxes; and, paſſing that way, decamped with five ſhillings in lieu of the three they had paid. In ſhort, by the extreme *juſtice* of the audience on the 18*th* of November, the proprietors of Covent Garden Theatre were ninety pounds out of pocket, beſides being deprived of a whole night's profit, and, added to this, the final loſs of an excellent actor, who never failed to fill their houſe whenever he performed.

Whether Mr. Sparks (in company with Mr. Reddiſh) was juſtifiable in his attack on Mr. Macklin, I ſhall not diſcuſs at preſent. It is ſufficient for our argument, that, ſuppoſing the circumſtances alledged againſt Mr. Reddiſh to have been true, there is a baſeneſs in the conception, and a raſcality in the execution of the plot, unequalled in all our theatrical annals.

I will not ſuppoſe Mr. Reddiſh capable of the alledged baſeneſs; but, unacquainted with Mr. Red-

diſh's circumſtances, and well acquainted with the ſuperabundant pride of Mr. G——k's heart, I can ſuppoſe that, in this one inſtance, the pride of the manager kept pace with his avarice, and that poor Reddiſh was made tool a to effect the purpoſes of two of the baſeſt paſſions that can torment the human breaſt.—To what has been ſaid, I ſhall ſubjoin an animadverſion or two on ſome of the ſtrictures which have been made on Mr. Macklin's merits in the performance of Macbeth.

It ſtrikes me that the arguments advanced againſt the gentleman in queſtion are not leſs futile in imagination than malicious in intention, and falſe with regard to the fact intended to be proved.

One of the heinous allegations againſt Charles Macklin is, that he attempted to perform the part of a King at ſeventy years of age. Who does not remember that George the Second, a King in every ſenſe of the word, lived a King at more than ſeventy, and died a King at ſeventy-three? Who does not alſo recollect that the late inimitable comedian Ryan, who originally performed the part of Portius, in the reign of Queen Ann, performed it alſo in the year 1760, to the univerſal ſatisfaction of the moſt crouded audiences. Shall it be alledged againſt Macklin, that he could not be a King at ſeventy, when Ryan was a Prince at the ſame age? The admirers of Mr. Garrick are fond of trumpeting his fame, and are particularly ſanguine in their applauſe of a comedian, who can pleaſe them as well in the year 1773, as he did 30 years preceding this period. Shall the argument, which is allowed forcible in the caſe of Mr. Garrick, be inadmiſſible in that of Mr. Macklin. Abſurdity itſelf would bluſh at the idea. Macklin, indeed, is an old man, but he retains in the decline of life, powers ſuperior to thoſe which many juvenile performers never did, nor ever can poſſeſs.

It is insinuated against Mr. Macklin, that his figure is porter-like, and his address unbecoming the gentleman; yet, hundreds of persons would be affronted if they were not deemed gentlemen, who have for a series of successive years, confessed themselves charmed and instructed by the exquisite performances of this very comedian. What an absurdity!

It is urged, too, that Mr. Macklin is of low parentage, and ill educated. What greater compliment can be paid to any man, than first to ridicule him on the obscurity of his birth, and the contraction of his education, and then to confess that the superior powers of his mental faculties, and the superior exertion of those faculties, have in a thousand instances contributed to the highest gratification and rational entertainment of that multitude which is now most forward to censure him?

*** *The impatience of the lovers of the Drama, for the publication of this Apology, was such, that it was an absolute impossibility to have printed* every *piece for and against the gentleman in question in* this *edition; but a second may be expected in a few days, with great and material additions.*

SPECIMENS *of the* POETICAL SQUIBS

Occaſioned by Mr. Macklin's *Appearance in* MACBETH.

A Cart-horſe once to run with race-horſe try'd,
The cart-horſe labour'd, loſt his breath, and dy'd.
[St. James's Chronicle.]

THE witches, while living, deluded *Macbeth*,
And the devil laid hold of his ſoul after death;
But to puniſh the tyrant this would not content him,
So *Macklin* he ſent on the ſtage to preſent him.
[St. James's Chronicle.]

MACBETH.

"*Eight Kings appear and paſs over in order, and* Banquo *the laſt.*

OLD *Quin*, ere fate ſuppreſs'd his lab'ring breath,
In ſtudied accents grumbled out *Macbeth*:—
Next *Garrick* came, whoſe utt'rance truth impreſs'd,
While ev'ry look the tyrant's guilt confeſs'd:—
Then the cold *Sheridan* half froze the part,
Yet, what he loſt by nature, ſav'd by art:—
Tall *Barry* now advanc'd tow'rd *Birnam* Wood,
Nor ill perform'd the ſcenes—he underſtood:—
Grave *Meſſop* next to *Foris* ſhap'd his march,
His words were minute-guns, his action ſtarch:—
Rough *Holland* too—but paſs his errors o'er,
Nor blame the actor when the man's no more!—
Then heavy *Roſs* aſſay'd the tragic frown,
But beef and pudding kept all meaning down:—
Next careleſs *Smith* try'd on the murd'rer's maſk,
While o'er his tongue light tripp'd the hurried taſk:—
Hard *Macklin*, late, guilt's feelings ſtrove to ſpeak,
While ſweats infernal drench'd his iron cheek;
Like *Fielding*'s Kings*, his fancy'd triumphs paſt,
And all he boaſts, is, that he falls the laſt.

* In *Tom Thumb.*

[St. James's Chronicle.]

The Trial of CHARLES MECHLIN, *for the Murder of* THOMAS HALLAM.

AT the ſeſſions held at the Old-Bailey, in the month of May, 1735, *Charles Mechlin*, was indicted for the murder of Thomas Hallam, by thruſting a ſtick into his left eye, and thereby giving him one mortal wound of the breadth of a quarter of an inch, and the depth of one inch and a half, on the 10th of May, of which mortal wound he languiſhed till the next day, and then died.

He was a ſecond time indicted on the Coroner's Inquiſition for the ſaid murder.

Thomas Arne depoſed, that he was numberer of Drury-Lane Playhouſe, under Mr. Fleetwood: that at eight o'clock at night, he went into the ſcene-room, where the players warm themſelves, and ſat down in a chair at the end of the fire:—fronting the fire there was a long ſcreen where five or ſix might ſit.

The play was almoſt finiſhed, and they were making preparation for the entertainment, when the priſoner came in and ſat down next to this deponent: high words aroſe between the priſoner and the deceaſed about a ſtock wig, for a diſguiſe in the entertainment; the priſoner had played in this wig the preceding night, and now the deceaſed had got it. "D—— ye for a rogue," ſaid the priſoner, "what buſineſs have you with my wig?" "I am "no more a rogue than yourſelf," ſaid the deceaſed. "It's a ſtock wig, and I have as much right to it as "you." Some of the players coming in, they deſired the deceaſed to fetch the wig and give it to the priſoner, which he did, and ſaid to him, "Here is your wig, I have got one that I like better." The priſoner, ſitting by this deponent, took the wig, and began to comb it out, and all ſeemed to be very quiet for half a quarter of an hour; but the priſoner began to grumble again, and ſaid to the deceaſed, "G— "d—— ye for a black-guard ſcrub raſcal, how durſt "you have the impudence to take this wig?" The de-

ceaſed anſwered, "I am no more a raſcal than yourſelf." Upon which the priſoner ſtarted up out of his chair, and having a ſtick in his hand, he gave a full longe at the deceaſed, and thruſt the ſtick into his left eye, and pulling it back again, he looked pale, turned on his heel, and in a paſſion, threw the ſtick in the fire: "G—d damn it," ſaid he, and turning about again upon his heel, he ſat down.

The deceaſed clapped his hand to his eye, and ſaid it was gone through his head: he was going to ſink, and they ſet him in a chair: the priſoner went to him, and put his hand to his eye, on which the deceaſed cried, "Lord! it is out." "No," ſaid the priſoner, "I feel the ball roll under my hand." Young Mr. Cibber then came it, and immediately ſent for Mr. Coldham, the ſurgeon.

The priſoner aſking this evidence if he ſhewed any concern afterwards; his anſwer was, "I believe he was "under the utmoſt ſurpriſe, by his turning about, and "throwing the ſtick in the fire, and he ſhewed a farther "concern when he felt of the eye-ball."

Thomas Whitaker depoſed, that he was a dreſſer in the houſe, under a comedy player: that on the Friday night the priſoner aſked him to lend him a comedy-wig, to play Sancho, in the Fop's Fortune.

The next night the deceaſed came and aſked for the ſame wig; but this deponent told him he had it not, and bid him go to the other dreſſer. As this deponent was afterwards waiting in the hall for his money, the priſoner came in, and aſked the deceaſed for the wig; but the deceaſed anſwered, that he ſhould not have it; and the priſoner replied, "you're an impudent raſcal, and ought to "be caned for your impudence."

Mr. Mills, who was acting Juba, came and ſaid, "What's the matter with you? We can't play for the "noiſe you make;" and the priſoner anſwered, "This "raſcal has got a whig that belongs to me." Mr. Mills ſaid to the deceaſed, "Hallam, don't be impertinent, but "give him the wig." Hallam ſtill refuſed, upon which the priſoner ſaid, "G—d damn ye, ſuch little raſcals as "you ought to be made an example of," and then turned out of the room.

This deponent being dreſſed in ſhape, went up and undreſt. Mr. Woodford bid him bring down a ſcymetar, which

which he did, but when he came down he could not find Woodford, upon which he went into the ſcene-room.

The deceaſed was then ſtanding ſtill between the door and the ſettle: the priſoner was about three yards from him, and ſtarting up he made a ſudden longe; the deceaſed clapped his hand to his eye, and made a reel, as if was throwing himſelf into the ſettle: the priſoner ſeemed to relent.

Mr. Cole depoſed, that the deceaſed came firſt into the ſcene-room, and complained that the priſoner had uſed him ill about a comedy-wig. The priſoner ſoon followed, and ſaid the deceaſed had uſed him ill and impertinently, and he inſiſted upon having that wig.—They went out ſeparately. The deceaſed came in again. Mr. Fabian, the author of a farce to be acted that night, Mr. Mills, and others adviſed the deceaſed to let the priſoner have the wig, and Mr. Kitchen, the Property-man, promiſed to help him to a better.

The deceaſed fetched the wig and gave it to the priſoner, and then Mr. Kitchen gave another wig to the deceaſed. The deceaſed held out this wig to ſhew it, and ſaid he liked it better than the other; "You ſaucy impertinent raſcal," ſaid the priſoner, I wonder how ſuch a "little ſcoundrel dared to take a wig out of my dreſſing-"room;" the deceaſed told him he had it of the dreſſer. "D— ye, you dog," ſays the priſoner, "do ye prate?" and riſing up from the ſettle, he puſhed at the deceaſed, who then ſtood ſtock ſtill, between this deponent and the ſettle: this deponent was ſo near him, that he was afraid his own eye would have been hurt; the deceaſed reeled, and this deponent catched him in his arms.

Frances Lee depoſed, that the deceaſed came into the ſcene-room, and ſaid that the priſoner had uſed him like a pickpocket, about a wig: Mr. Mills and others adviſed him to go up and fetch him the wig: Mr. Kitchen called the deceaſed to the end of the room, and lent him another wig: he ſhewed this wig, and ſaid, he would not change with the priſoner, for he had got a better: the priſoner anſwered, "You are a ſcoundrel for taking it at "all;" to which the deceaſed replied, "No more a "ſcoundrel than yourſelf." Some other words paſſing, the priſoner roſe up, and ſaid (as this deponent believed) "D—n ye, you little dog, do you prate?" and then gave him the blow.

The deceaſed clapped both his hands to his eye, and cried "O Lord! I believe my eye is out;" and would have fallen in the fire if Mr. Cole had not catched him.

When he was ſeated, this deponent aſking him how he did, he ſaid, "Lord! I believe my eye-ball is ſhoved to the other ſide of my head." This deponent believed, that the priſoner had the deceaſed by the hand, all the while the ſurgeon was dreſſing him.

There were two other evidences, who depoſed pretty nearly the ſame as the above: and then Mr. Coldham, the ſurgeon, depoſed, that on the 10th of May, in the evening, he was ſent for and dreſſed the deceaſed, who dying the next day, this deponent opened the ſkull, and found the ſtick had paſſed through the thin bone that contains the eye, into the brain: that bone is extremely thin, and can make but little reſiſtance. This deponent ſaid, that if the blow had been elſewhere, it might have had a leſs fatal effect; and expreſſed his aſtoniſhment that a man ſhould die by ſuch an inſtrument. He likewiſe ſaid, that when he firſt attended the deceaſed, the priſoner ſhewed much concern, and deſired this deponent to take all poſſible care of the deceaſed.

The priſoner made his defence in the following words.

"I played Sancho the night before, and the wig I then uſed was proper for the new play, and abſolutely neceſſary for my character, the whole force of the poet's wit depending on the lean meagre looks of one that wanted food. This wig therefore being ſo fit for my purpoſe, and hearing that the deceaſed had got it, I ſaid to him, "You have got the wig I played in laſt night, and it fits "my part this night." "I have as much right to it as "you have," ſays he. I told him I deſired it as a favour; he ſaid, I ſhould not have it. "You are a ſcoundrel," ſays I, "to deny me, when I only aſk that as a favour, "which is my right." "I am no more a ſcoundrel than "yourſelf," ſays he, and ſo he went out, and I went to the prompter's door to ſee for Mr. Cibber. Mean-while the deceaſed went into the ſcene-room, and ſaid that I had uſed him like a pick-pocket. The author perſuaded him to let me have the wig, and the property-man brought him another wig. He threw the firſt wig at me. I aſked him, why he could not as well have done that before? he anſwered, "Becauſe you uſed me like a pick-pocket."

This

This provoked me, and rising up, I said, "D— ye for "a puppy, get out." His left side was then towards me, but he turned about unluckily and the stick went into his eye. "Good God!" says I, "What have I done!" and threw the stick into the chimney. I begged them to take the deceased to the bagnio, but Mrs. Moore said, she had a room where he should be taken care of. I had then no thought that it would prove his end, but feared that his eye was in danger. But next morning I saw Mr. Turbut, who advised me to keep out of the way, or I should be sent to jail: I begged him to get the assistance of a physician, and gave him a guinea, which was all the money I had. From the beginning of the quarrel to the end, it was but ten minutes, and there was no intermission."

Robert Turbut deposed, that he played that night, and was in the scene-room when the deceased came, and seemed flushed, and said, "Macklin has used me like a pick-"pocket: I had this wig of Mrs. Greenwood, the dresser, "and now he wants it; and I think it is as proper for "my character as his." The prisoner then came in and demanded the wig; upon which, in a merry way, it was put to the question which of them should have it, and it was agreed that the prisoner should.

Mr. Kitchen coming in, said, "Here is another wig;" upon which the deceased tossed the former wig to the prisoner, who said to him, "Why could not you have done "this before?" and the deceased answered, "Because "you used me like a pick-pocket." "You lie," said the prisoner, and "You lie," said the deceased. "You are a "scoundrel," said one; and "you are a scoundrel," said the other. At length, the prisoner, rising up, said, "Ye puppy, get out!" and made a push at the deceased, but (as this deponent believed) not with any particular aim.

The following gentlemen gave the prisoner the character of a man of a quiet and peaceable disposition; Mr. Rich, Mr. Fleetwood, Mr. Quin, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Mills, Mr. Lessley, Mr. Black, and Mr. Fern.

The jury brought in their verdict, Manslaughter.

An ACCOUNT *of the* LIFE *and* GENIUS *of Mr.* CHARLES MACKLIN, COMEDIAN.

MR. MACKLIN is a native of Ireland, and comes from the county of Weſtmeath. His original name is ſaid to be M'Laughlin; but finding this rather difficult to be expreſſed by an Engliſh tongue, he, on his firſt coming on the ſtage, angliciſed it to that of Macklin, by which he has ever ſince been known. A ſtory is told of him, on this account, that an Iriſh acquaintance calling on him one morning, and enquiring for him by the name of M'Laughlin, the landlady told him he was miſtaken, for no ſuch perſon lodged there: but Macklin, overhearing the converſation, ran down ſtairs, and acknowledged his old friend. This tranſaction appearing ſomewhat odd, ſhe next morning acquainted her lodger, that ſhe would no longer harbour a man who went by two names; but he ſoon ſatisfied her by laughing it off, and telling her, that M'Laughlin was the Iriſh manner of pronouncing Macklin.

His merit as an actor, entitles him to rank in the firſt forum; his Sir Gilbert Wrangle, Don Manuel, Sir Archy M'Sarcaſm, and Iago, are convincing evidences of this; but the part he has ever been allowed to ſhine in, without a competitor, is that of Shylock, in the Merchant of Venice. Quin's blunt compliment paid him on this occaſion, "If G—d writes a legible hand, that fellow's a villain,"—with that other well known eulogium,

This is the Jew
That Shakeſpeare drew,

Have ſo confirmed Mr. Macklin's reputation in this character, that, though allowed excellent in many, he has been always looked upon unrivalled in this. Beſide his merits as an actor, he has been conſidered as a good theatrical

precep-

preceptor; and being ever a man of ſtrong obſervation, he has uſed it fortunately in this purſuit; and, indeed, the ſucceſs Miſs Macklin has met with, ſeems a corroborating proof of it, as, it is ſaid, ſhe ſtands indebted to the inſtruction of her father (in oppoſition to inclination) for that theatrical propriety which has ſo deſervedly gained her the favour of the town.

As a writer, though he has been the author of many pieces, two only (Love-a-la-Mode, and The True-born Iriſhman) have outlived the period of their repreſentation, ſaid to be owing, in a great reſpect, to the violence of party. Even the laſt of theſe ceaſes to be repreſented in this kingdom, though acted with great ſucceſs in Ireland: nor is it to be wondered at, why it ſhould not be palatable to an Engliſh audience; for, though it abounds with great humour and obſervation, the ridicule is *local*, and the dialogue, for the moſt part, *national*. The former, Love-a-la-Mode, has been always well received here; and as he has never printed it, it has from time to time brought him great emolument, being paid as an author out of the profits of the night.

Though this piece does not want character and ſatire, yet it muſt be obſerved, his partiality for his country has tranſported him a little from the ſtrictneſs of the drama; for, out of four lovers, who are addreſſing a young lady of fortune, he makes an Iriſh officer the only one that is diſintereſted.—A character ſo widely different from what experience has, in general, fixed on the gentlemen of that kingdom, that, although there are undoubtedly many amongſt them poſſeſſed of minds capable of great honour and generoſity, yet this *excluſive* compliment to them, in oppoſition to received opinion, ſeems to convey a degree of prejudice, which as a dramatic writer, and a countryman, he ſhould be ſtudious to avoid. The character, abſtracted from this, along with the three others, are, however, admirably drawn, but the cataſtrophe is borrowed from Theo. Cibber's comedy of the Lover; and the Iriſhman bears too great a reſemblance to Sheridan's Captain O'Blunder, to entitle its being looked on as an entire original.

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What is very extraordinary, and reflects no inconsiderable degree of honour on Mr. Macklin's genius, is a circumstance that is told of him with great credibility; which is, that he was *thirty-five* years of age before he could either *write* or *read*. The late ingenious Mr. Dr[illegible] aſſerts this for a fact, in his poem called the Au[illegible], and quotes George Colman, Eſq; one of the present patentees of Covent Garden, for aſſerting him to be *fact*. To arrive at ſuch an advanced age of life, as either of theſe periods mentioned, muſt make it very wonderful how he could ever become proficient enough in either, to fit him for the ordinary courſe of buſineſs; but when we conſider him, though ſo late, arriving to the character of a writer of ſome conſequence, it is a phænomenon only to be accounted for by an uncommon ſtrength of natural genius, aſſiſted by an unwearied application.